The relationship with your supervisor or manager is probably the most important relationship you have at work.

Managing your manager can lead to an improved working life, more job satisfaction, and a more manageable workload. Here are some tips to help you develop a good working relationship with your manager.

**Observe and Understand your Manager’s Style**

- Look for clues that tell you how she likes work done or how she prefers to get information. If you’re not sure what your manager expects from you, in terms of results, work habits, communication style, or anything else, then don’t try to guess – ask! Any reasonable manager will gladly answer these questions and be pleased by your interest.
- Decision-making styles vary. Some managers are highly involved. Touch base with them frequently. Others prefer less information. Inform them about important decisions you’ve already made.

**Promote Communication and Information Flow**

- Don’t underestimate what your manager needs to know—or what they do know. Keep the manager informed through processes that fit his style. Be forthright about both good and bad news.
- Communicate your expectations and make sure you know your manager’s expectations. Give updates with the appropriate level of detail. Don’t passively assume you know what your manager expects. Find out.

**Be Mindful of Time and Resources**

- Don’t waste your manager’s time with trivial issues. Selectively draw on his time and resources to meet the most important goals—yours, his, and the university’s.

**Provide solutions, not problems**

- There are going to be problems. But when you let your manager know about those problems, give her your proposed solution(s). That shows that you have thought the situations through and have the good of the organization in mind. Covering up problems or failures, and trying to sweep things under the rug will only hurt you and erode the trust you need in your relationship with your manager.